



Date: Thursday, 14 December 2023
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND
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COUNCIL

TO FOLLOW REPORT (S)

17 Constitution of Committees and the Allocation of Seats to Political Groups (Pages 1 - 6)

Report of the Assistant Director – Legal and Governance is attached

Contact Tim Collard 01743 252756

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Council

14 December 2023

Item

Public



CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

Responsible Officer:	Tim Collard		
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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Councillor Lezley Picton		

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 A recent change in membership, as a result of the election of Councillor Colin Taylor to the Alveley and Claverley division, requires amendments to the distribution of seats on committees, and other bodies to which proportionality rules apply.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 require the Council to review the representation of each political group on committees, panels etc. at each annual meeting or as soon as practicable after that meeting. The regulations require that all Scrutiny, Standing and Regulatory Committees are politically balanced across the total number of committee places. Subject to that overriding requirement, each committee must also be politically balanced, as far as it is reasonably practicable.
- 2.2 The Executive (Cabinet) is not subject to the political balance rules.
- 2.3 Advisory Committees and other ad hoc bodies and groups are not subject to the political balance rules either, but traditionally political proportionality has been applied to them outside the overall aggregate balance referred to in paragraph 2.1 above.

- 2.4 The Council has been advised that Councillor Taylor is to be a member of the Liberal Democrat Group. The by-election was required to be held following the resignation of Elliot Lynch, who had been a member of the Conservative Group.
- 2.5 Accordingly, it is necessary to review the membership of committees to reflect this change in the relative size of the political groups.
- 2.6 In order to accurately reflect the political balance of the authority, and to comply with the principles set out within the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, it is recommended that an additional seat on the Standards Committee be allocated to the Liberal Democrat Group at the expense of the Green Group. Other configurations have been explored with the Group Leaders but this Recommendation produces an overall political balance which most closely meets the legislative requirements.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That the Council confirms the revised allocation of seats to each of the political groups for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year as a consequence of the change in group membership as follows:
- a) That the composition and revised allocation of seats on its committees and other bodies as detailed in the report be approved.
 - b) That the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group provides notification of which of its members will be appointed as a member of the Standards Committee.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. The Council is obliged to ensure that the membership of committees and related bodies is proportionate to individual group membership.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. The allocation of seats on Committees will have no obvious financial implications.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. The allocation of seats on Committees will have no obvious impact in terms of climate change.

7. Background

- 7.1. The Council is required to approve the allocation of seats to the political groups for the remainder of the coming year. In accordance with the Political Balance Rules, the revised maximum number of seats available to each of the groups will be:

<u>Committee Name</u>	<u>Seats per Committee</u>
Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11
People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11
Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11
Pensions Committee	4
Audit Committee	5
Strategic Licensing Committee	15
Standards Committee	9
Southern Planning Committee	11
Northern Planning Committee	11
Housing Supervisory Board	9
Total	<u>108</u>

8. Allocation of Seats

- 8.1. The Council is required to approve the allocation of seats to the political groups for the coming year.
- 8.2. The maximum number of seats available to each group within the political balance rules will be:

<u>Group Name</u>	<u>Seats per Group</u>
Conservatives	60
Liberal Democrats	24
Labour	14
Independent	5
Green	5
Total	<u>108</u>

- 8.3. The proportionate allocation of seats to the political groups across all committees is set out in Appendix 1.
- 8.4. The Council is entitled to 10 seats on the Shropshire and Wrekin Combined Fire Authority. Under the present arrangements, the Conservative Group is entitled to 6 seats, the Liberal Democrat Group 2 seats, the Labour Group 1 seat and the Independent Group 1 seat.
- 8.5. The proposed allocation of seats meets the legal requirements, however, should the Council wish, it is possible to agree allocations which are not strictly politically balanced if no Member dissents.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Regulations made thereunder.

Local Member: All

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Constitution of Committees and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

APPENDIX 1

ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

Composition of the Council	Cons	Lib Dem	Lab	Ind	Green	Total
	39	17	10	4	4	74

SCRUTINY

	Cons	Lib Dem	Lab	Ind	Green	Total
Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6	2	2	1	0	11
People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6	3	1	0	1	11
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6	3	1	1	0	11
Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6	2	2	0	1	11

STANDING AND REGULATORY

	Cons	Lib Dem	Lab	Ind	Green	Total
Pensions Committee	3	1	0	0	0	4
Audit Committee	3	1	1	0	0	5
Standards	5	2	1	1	0	9
Strategic Licensing Committee	8	3	2	1	1	15
Northern Planning Committee	6	3	1	0	1	11
Southern Planning Committee	6	2	2	1	0	11
Housing Supervisory Board	5	2	1	0	1	9
Aggregate No Seats Required	60	24	14	5	5	108

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